

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed May 24, 2004. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's consideration of the Application. Claims 7 and 12 have been cancelled, and Claims 1, 11, 13, and 14 have been amended to clarify, more particularly point out, and more distinctly claim inventive concepts previously present in these claims. Applicants make no admission that these amendments narrow the scope of the claims or are required for patentability. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added by the amendments to the claims. In order to advance prosecution of this Application, Applicants have responded to each notation by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Objected to Claims

The Examiner indicated that Claims 2, 7, 9, 10, and 12-17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. (Office Action, page 6, paragraph one.) Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 7, and Claim 11 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 12.

Section 103(a) Rejection

The Examiner rejects Claims 1, 3-6, 8, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,385,454 to Bahl et al. ("*Bahl*") in light of U.S. Patent No. 6,594,245 to Rimhagen et al. ("*Rimhagen*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

The Examiner indicated that Claims 2, 7, 9, 10, and 12-17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. (Office Action, page 6, paragraph one.) Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 7, and Claim 11 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 12. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 1 and 11.

Applicants' dependent claims are allowable based on their dependence on the independent claims and further because they recite numerous additional patentable distinctions. Because Applicants believe they have amply demonstrated the allowability of

the independent claims, and to avoid burdening the record, Applicants have not provided detailed remarks concerning these dependent claims. Applicants, however, remain ready to provide such remarks if it becomes appropriate to do so.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of independent Claims 1 and 11 and all claims that depend on these claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all the pending claims.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance prosecution of this case in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact Keiko Ichiye, the Attorney for Applicants, at the Examiner's convenience at (214) 953-6494.

Although Applicants believe no fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

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